

Pest Update (October 21-28, 2009)

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Available on the net at:

<http://www.state.sd.us/doa/Forestry/educational-information/Pest-Alert-Archives.htm>.

Any treatment recommendations, including those identifying specific pesticides, are for the convenience of the reader. Pesticides mentioned in this publication are generally those that are most commonly available to the public in South Dakota and the inclusion of a product shall not be taken as an endorsement or the exclusion a criticism regarding effectiveness. Please read and follow all label instructions and the label is the final authority for a product's use on a particular pest or plant. Products requiring a commercial pesticide license are occasionally mentioned if there are limited options available. These products will be identified as such but it is the reader's responsibility to determine if they can legally apply any product identified in this publication.

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You can tell it has been snowy, wet and miserable outside the last few weeks.

The samples and emails have been few since most folks were not really interested in going outside to look at their trees! At least this year we do not have to worry too much about tree receiving enough water before winter. The ground is moist in much of the state and many of our woody plants are preparing just fine for the coming cold weather.

Information request

I had a question about the use of Rocky Mountain juniper on East River sites. Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*) is native to

scattered parts of West River, while eastern redcedar (*J. virginiana*) is native to southeastern South Dakota (west to Gregory County) and its range extends to the Atlantic Ocean. Rocky Mountain juniper is native to arid climates and is more drought tolerant than its eastern cousin. However, in the more humid climate of eastern South Dakota, the tree is prone to some of the juniper blight pathogens, particularly cercospora blight. This increased disease problem was the foundation for the recommendation not to plant Rocky Mountain juniper east of the 100th median (VanHaverbeke and King. 1990. USDA For Ser Res Pap RM-292). However Peter Schaefer, a Professor at SDSU wrote regarding his trials that Rocky Mountain juniper from Wyoming and western Montana could be planted in eastern South Dakota though they had a slower growth rate than eastern redcedar (Schaefer. 1995. Northern J. Appl. For. 12(1): 30-35). In my experience I prefer leaving Rocky Mountain juniper to West River sites and eastern redcedar to East River sites, primarily due to the disease problems I have seen.

Samples received

Beadle County (extension)

What is this coming around the tree stump?



These are puffballs, the globular fruiting structure found on certain fungi. Puffballs are common found in the fall on moist humus or decaying tree stumps. When the puffballs dry (as they were by the time they reached my office), they break easily and emits puffs of dust-size powdery spores. Some puffballs can become as large as 4 feet across while others are the size of a golf ball. Many are edible but only when they are fresh, once the interiors begin to turn color they should not be eaten.

Also never eat these or any other fungi until it has been identified to species

Codington County (extension-homeowner) **What is wrong with my Colorado blue spruce? The top of the tree is dying out but the rest is fine.**

I was not able to determine the problem from the samples submitted. The problem is not in the tip of the terminals but probably starts further down the trunk. I'll have to stop by and see the tree.

Perkin County (extension)

What is this low growing evergreen shrub? Is it ground juniper?

Yes, this is the common juniper (*Juniperus communis*), a species found around the northern hemisphere so it can be found throughout Canada and northern US, northern Europe and northern Asia.